A truly benevolent legiſlator always endeavours to make it the intereſt of each individual to be virtuous; and thus private virtue becoming the cement of public happineſs, an orderly whole is conſolidated by the tendency of all the parts towards a common centre. But, the private or public virtue of woman is very problematical; for Rouſſeau, and a numerous liſt of male writers, inſiſt that ſhe ſhould all her life be ſubjected to a ſevere reſtraint, that of propriety. Why ſubject her to propriety—blind propriety, if ſhe be capable of acting from a nobler ſpring, if ſhe be an heir of immortality? Is ſugar always to be produced by vital blood? Is one half of the human ſpecies, like the poor African ſlaves, to be ſubject to prejudices that brutalize them, when principles would be a ſurer guard, only to ſweeten the cup of man? Is not this indirectly to deny woman reaſon? for a gift is a mockery, if it be unfit for uſe.

Women are, in common with men, rendered weak and luxurious by the relaxing pleaſures which wealth procures; but added to this they are made ſlaves to their perſons, and muſt render them alluring that man may lend

lend them his reaſon to guide their tottering ſteps aright. Or ſhould they be ambitious, they muſt govern their tyrants by ſiniſter tricks, for without rights there cannot be any incumbent duties. The laws reſpecting woman, which I mean to diſcuſs in a future part, make an abſurd unit of a man and his wife; and then, by the eaſy tranſition of only conſidering him as reſponſible, ſhe is reduced to a mere cypher.

The being who diſcharges the duties of its ſtation is independent; and, ſpeaking of women at large, their firſt duty is to themſelves as rational creatures, and the next, in point of importance, as citizens, is that, which includes ſo many, of a mother. The rank in life which diſpenſes with their fulfilling this duty, neceſſarily degrades them by making them mere dolls. Or, ſhould they turn to ſomething more important than merely fitting drapery upon a ſmooth block, their minds are only occupied by ſome ſoft platonic attachment; or, the actual management of an intrigue may keep their thoughts in motion; for when they neglect domeſtic duties, they have it not in their power to take the field and march and counter-march like ſoldiers, or